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and Lower Forms of Plant Life." This medal is awarded annually to a senior in the University of Wisconsin for quality and quantity of research in preparing a thesis in physical or natural science, or pure mathematics, or their useful applications.

DR. GOLDWATER, health commissioner of New York City, has resigned in order to resume his duties as superintendent of Mt. Sinai Hospital.

EDGAR M. LEDYARD, formerly assistant professor of entomology in the University of the Philippines, who has spent the last year in research work in the laboratory of parasitology of the University of California, has been appointed director of the Agricultural Department of the United States Smelting Company, Salt Lake City, Utah.

COLONEL WILLIAM HUNTER, M.D., assistant physician to Charing Cross Hospital; Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Buchanan, M.D., first assistant medical officer to the local government board; Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Balfour, C.M.G., director of the Wellcome Bureau of Scientific Research, and Lieutenant-Colonel Leonard Dudgeon, F.R.C.P., lecturer on general and special pathology at St. Thomas's Hospital, have gone to the Dardanelles, as an advisory committee to assist the British Royal Army Medical Corps in dealing with epidemics.

THE St. Louis University has fitted up an expedition to make a study of tropical diseases and biology in British and Spanish Honduras. The party which left New Orleans on July 21, was composed of the following: John P. Coony, Ph.D., S.J., professor of chemistry; E. N. Tobey, M.D., instructor in tropical diseases, and A. M. Schwitalla, S.J., A.M., a student in biology.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

MR. C. W. DYSON PERRINS, who gave £5,000 toward the construction of the University of Oxford chemical laboratory which is nearing completion, has lately offered to present to the university a further sum of £25,000, of which £5,000 is to be applied to the equipment of the laboratory, and the remaining £20,000 is to

form a permanent endowment fund for maintenance of the laboratory and for the encouragement of research and instruction in chemistry.

GEORGE PEABODY COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS has received \$8,500 from Miss Eleanor Cuyler of New York City and Mr. Thos. DeWitt Cuyler of Philadelphia, for equipping the Jesup Psychology Laboratory. This amount of money is to be spent for furniture, laboratory equipment and psychological publications.

PROFESSOR H. S. JACKSON, of the Oregon Agricultural College, has accepted the position of head of the botanical department of the Agricultural Experiment Station of Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, to take effect September first, as successor to Dr. J. C. Arthur, who retires as a beneficiary of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

DR. E. W. SINNOTT, of the Bussey Institution, has been appointed professor of botany and genetics at the Connecticut Agricultural College.

AT Yale University, Reynold A. Spaeth, Ph.D. (Harvard, '13), instructor in embryology at Clark University, has been appointed instructor in biology in Yale College.

THE following appointments have been made at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: George Owen (M. I. T., '94), assistant professor of naval architecture; Royal M. Frye, A.B., instructor in physics; Charles H. Calder, Horatio W. Lamson and Joseph C. MacKinnon, assistants in physics; Elwyn E. Snyder, Jr., assistant in industrial chemistry.

AT Rutgers College research assistants have been appointed as follows:

Roland E. Curtis, B.S. (Oregon), soil bacteriology.
F. E. Allison, B.S. (Purdue), M.S. (Iowa State),
Amos Phos fellow.

Selman A. Waksman, B.S. (Rutgers), soil bacteriology.

Carl R. Fellers, B.S. (Cornell), soy bean.

William S. Porte, B.S. (Rutgers), plant physiology.

Orville Schultz, B.S. (Iowa State), plant breeding.

W. H. Martin, B.S. (Maine), plant pathology.

W. S. Krout, B.S., M.A. (Ohio State), plant pathology.

Homer E. Carney, B.S. (Miami), botany.

A. C. Foster, B.S. (Alabama Polytechnic), botany.
Franklin O. Church, B.S. (Rutgers), hydraulic engineering.

F. P. Schlatter, B.S. (Pennsylvania State), cranberry investigations.

DR. FRANCIS ARTHUR BAINBRIDGE, of the University of Durham, has been appointed to the University of London chair of physiology tenable at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE
LOSING THE ADVANTAGES OF THE BINOMIAL SYSTEM
OF NOMENCLATURE

THE communication from Dr. F. B. Sumner which appeared in *SCIENCE* for June 18 last on the subject of saving the genus as a category of zoological classification, is certainly a timely one, and expresses views that are by no means confined to its author. It will require but little examination of the facts to lead to the conclusion that not the enforcement of the law of priority, but unrestricted splitting of genera, is responsible for most of the confusion and instability which characterize zoological nomenclature to-day, and makes it a source of inconvenience and uncertainty, demanding from scientific men much profitless labor, and expenditure of mental energy sufficient to bring about important advances in science if it could be turned into some useful channel.

Few zoologists ever stop to think how far we are getting away from a real binomial system of nomenclature. It is true that scientific names of animals still consist of two words, but only in a minority of cases does the first term of the binomial have any real meaning to us, or suggest ideas of a much broader and more comprehensive character than the second one. The genus name has become little more than a mere prefix to, or part of, the species name. The addition of a few more letters or syllables to the latter (to prevent confusion of organisms which have chanced to receive the same specific designation) would serve the same purpose. We learn generic names, if we learn them at all, by mere acts of memory, and we use them because we find them in the latest monographs and

might be thought not up to date if we did otherwise, but what the distinctions are between these multitudes of closely allied genera we rarely stop to inquire. Indeed, if we do have interest enough to look up such points, the slight importance and complexity of the distinctions are apt to surprise and discourage us, and convince us that we had better take the specialist's word for them, and spend our time and labor in some more useful way. In short, though our classification is binomial in form, it is only very imperfectly so in effect.

Even within the memory of some scientific men living to-day, the system in use did still afford the practical advantages which secured the universal adoption of the system of Linnæus. The recognized genera, though even then being multiplied to an inconvenient extent, were still in a majority of cases separated by sufficiently well-marked characters and not as yet too numerous to enable the professional zoologist and even the more serious amateur students of the science to recognize by name and classify a large proportion of the genera, and to recall some of their more important characters. A genus name had in those days a real meaning to some others besides the specialists in the class of animals to which the genus happened to belong.

It would be a mistake to maintain that zoological classification has suffered through the recognition of these minor subdivisions. They exist in nature, and should have a recognition commensurate with their importance. The older and more comprehensive genera are now in many cases treated as subfamilies or families. Classification has gained in exactness and truthful representation of the facts, but through our neglect to keep the first term of our scientific names comprehensive in its application, and easily distinguished and remembered in its meaning, we have allowed our nomenclature to lose most of the practical advantages and conveniences of the Linnæan system.

Unfortunately, specialists, as Dr. Sumner has hinted, are only too apt to study their specimens till they see only differences and lose sight of much more important resemblances,